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THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
WILDERNESS AREAS AND ECOLOGICAL RESERVES

APRIL 1, 1985 to MARCH 31, 1986

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September 5, 1986

The Honourable Dr. David Carter
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Sir:

I have the honour of transmitting the Third Annual Report of the Advisory Committee on Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves.

Respectfully submitted,

Norm A. Weiss
Minister of Alberta
Recreation and Parks

International Youth Year
1985
Année internationale de la jeunesse
1985

Alberta

RECREATION AND PARKS

Standard Life Centre
10405 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5J 3N4

September 3, 1986

The Honourable Norm Weiss
Minister of Recreation and Parks
107 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Sir:

I have the honour to present the Third Annual Report of the Advisory Committee on Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves.

Respectfully submitted,

D. E. Cline
Chairman
Advisory Committee on Wilderness
Areas and Ecological Reserves

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN

During this, the third year of operation, the Advisory Committee held four public meetings to discuss the interests of the public with regard to the possible establishment of seven ecological reserves. Throughout the course of the year the Committee received written and verbal feedback in relation to the seven candidate sites, as well as the Ecological Reserves Program in general. The interest and input received from the general public in conjunction with that of provincial organizations was essential to the development of recommendations for candidate ecological reserves addressed in this report. Through this process the Advisory Committee has achieved an understanding and appreciation of the varying viewpoints regarding specific candidate ecological reserves and of the overall program.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the members of Advisory Committee for their dedication and effort in working towards the systematic establishment of ecological reserves in Alberta. I would also like to extend on behalf of the Committee our special thanks to Dr. Doug Miller of Lethbridge for his contribution to the program. Dr. Miller has served a two year term with the Committee.

I am saddened to report, as well, that Mr. Charles Archibald, charter member and good friend of the Committee, passed away in May of 1986. He will be missed by all of us.

With the possible establishment of the first ecological reserves and the continuing review and evaluation of candidate ecological reserves during coming years, the Committee feels Alberta is working towards establishing a system of Ecological Reserves.

D. E. Cline, Chairman
Wilderness Areas and Ecological
Reserves Advisory Committee

ROLE OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee on Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves has been appointed to represent the interests of the general public as they pertain to Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves and to advise the Minister of Recreation and Parks and the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife on matters relevant to those interests. The guiding principle in the operation and deliberation of the Advisory Committee is reconciling the best interests of the system of Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves with the many interests of the public as a whole.

The Advisory Committee was established pursuant to Section 2 of the Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves and Natural Areas Act, 1981. Following is the role of the Advisory Committee as set out in Section 2(7) of the Act:

> 7(1) The Advisory Committee shall receive and consider requests from the public regarding wilderness areas and ecological reserves and may make recommendations to the Minister regarding:
>
> a) the establishment of new wilderness areas or ecological reserves;
>
> b) the addition of lands to wilderness areas or ecological reserves;
>
> c) withdrawal of lands from wilderness areas or ecological reserves, and
>
> d) the making of regulations for the administration, management, operation and utilization of wilderness areas, ecological reserves and controlled buffer zones.

The ultimate responsibility for decision-making on all matters relevant to Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves rests soley with the Minister of Recreation and Parks and the jurisdiction of the Advisory Committee does not include the authority to approve or make decisions.

Advisory Committee Membership

Membership of the Advisory Committee is set out in the Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves and Natural Areas Act as follows:

> 2(1) The Lieutenant Governor in Council shall establish a committee called the "Advisory Committee on Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves" consisting of 12 members and shall designate one of the members as chairman.
>
> (2) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may prescribe the term of office of any member of the Committee and the term of office of the chairman.
>
> (3) The Minister shall designate a member of the Advisory Committee as the secretary to the Committee.
>
> (4) The Advisory Committee shall consist of
>
> (a) 2 employees of the Department of Recreation and Parks,
> (b) 3 employees of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources,
> (c) 1 employee of the Department of Culture, and
> (d) 6 persons who are not employed by the Government or a government agency.

Membership of the Advisory Committee as appointed by Order-in-Council is as follows:

a) Donn E. Cline, Chairman, Department of Recreation and Parks
b) Larry F. Duchesne, Secretary, Department of Recreation and Parks
c) Everett H. Silver, Department of Energy & Natural Resources
d) Joseph A. Brennan,[1] Department of Energy & Natural Resources
e) Leslie J. Cooke, Department of Energy & Natural Resources
f) Dr. William J. Byrne, Department of Culture
g) Christian E. Andersen, Grande Prairie
h) Charles Archibald, Rosalind
i) Thomas Gilchrist, Milk River
j) Ken Kultgen, Foremost
k) Peter Orlecki, Two Hills
l) Vacancy (previously Dr. Doug Miller)

[1]Replaced by L.M. Forbes during leave of absence.

SUMMARY OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

April 18, 1985 - Edmonton

The committee met to discuss the workplan of the committee for 1985/86 as well as meet with representatives from the Alberta Wilderness Association, 4-Wheel Drive Association, Alberta Ecological Survey and, Alberta Fish and Game Association to discuss issues regarding the Ecological Reserves Program. The Committee answered questions and addressed concerns raised.

Notice was given that J. A. Brennan will be on a years leave of absence and be replaced by L. M. Forbes effective June 1, 1985.

July 3, 1985 - Spirit River

The committee held a public open house to address Silver Valley Candidate Ecological Reserve. This site has been proposed to represent a portion of the Peace River Parkland Natural Region.

The meeting was attended by a number of local officials including M.L.A. Jim Gurnett; Spirit River Mayor Verna Block; Town Councillors; Councillors from I.D. 19, I.D 20 and I.D. 21; I.D. Manager; a representative of the South Peace Regional Planning Commission; the President of the Alberta Trappers Association; as well as members of the general public. Those attending supported the establishment of an Ecological Reserve. Local elected and public officials attending felt that the entire area under consideration should be established as the ecological reserve and would be concerned with a management plan that allows more than hike-in access.

July 4, 1985 - Swan Hills

The committee held a public open house to address Goose Mountain Candidate Ecological Reserve. This site has been proposed to represent a portion of the Northern Outlier Zone of the Foothills Natural Region.

The meeting was attended by the Mayor of Swan Hills, representatives of Blue Ridge Lumber; the Alberta Trappers Association; the local paper; as well as members of the general public. Those attending supported the Ecological Reserves Program and the establishment of Goose Mountain Ecological Reserve. No major concerns were raised by anyone attending the open house, regarding alternate size options of the proposed reserve.

August 29, 1985 - Calgary

The committee met to discuss and develop recommendations for Silver Valley and Goose Mountain Candidate Ecological Reserves. The recommendations made are as follows:

Silver Valley

The Committee recommends the entire area under consideration, to the high water mark of the Peace River as shown on Map 1, be established as an Ecological Reserve. Should there be a need to consider a smaller area however, it is recommended that the area displayed on Map 2 be the minimum area designated as the Ecological Reserve. It is also recommended based on public input received, that the Management Plan for the area make provision for allowing an access corridor to the Peace River along the east boundary of the proposed reserve.

Goose Mountain

The Committee recommends the entire 'Northern Block' of the area under consideration with the exception of Section 7 and 12, Twp. 7, Rge. 15, W5M, as illustrated on Map 3, be established as an Ecological Reserve. Should there be a need to consider a smaller area, it is recommended the area as shown on Map 4 be the minimum area designated. The Committee also recommends, based on public input received, that the Management Plan make provision for allowing an access corridor from the Goose Mountain Look-Out Tower Road through the Ecological Reserve to an area north of the reserve which is presently used for hunting access purposes.

September 11, 1985 - Fort McMurray

The Committee held a public open house to address Athabasca Dunes, Whitemud Falls and Crow Lake Candidate Ecological Reserves.

The meeting in Fort McMurray was attended by approximately 40 people. In general, support for the Ecological Reserves program was expressed.

Athabasca Dunes

This site would represent the Athabasca Plain in the Canadian Shield Natural Region. Many of the public saw an ecological reserve as a means for providing needed protection for the area, however some individuals felt that designation as an ecological reserve could create more interest in the area resulting in increased use. Concern was raised regarding mineral exploration east of the Maybelle River within the Candidate Ecological Reserve. Fly-in fishing outfitters indicated that a number of lakes in the southeast corner of the proposed area are excellent fisheries and would not like to see the activity restricted. Other than the above noted concerns the public supported the establishment of an ecological reserve for the dunes.

Crow Lake

This site represents the Mixed Wood portion of the Boreal Forest Natural Region. It contains a high degree of diversity due to topography and its location in a transition zone between plains and uplands. Few comments were received on this site. The one concern raised was that if all of Crow Lake was established as an ecological reserve, water based recreational activities would be limited. No other objections to the proposed ecological reserve were raised.

Whitemud Falls

This site also represents the Mixed Wood Boreal Forest Natural Region and has unique geomorphic and biological features. A concern raised by those attending was that they felt the river would be closed and restrict public use of the river. A historic portage route exists around the falls and an Alberta Forest Service campsite is located on the river adjacent to the falls. Once it was pointed out that there would not be any restriction on river use and that the campsite and portage route would remain in use, most of those present favored the establishment of an ecological reserve.

September 25, 1985 - Rocky Mountain House

The Committee held a public open house to address Kootenay Plains and Marshybank Candidate Ecological Reserves.

The meeting was attended by representatives of industry, the press, public service organizations, and the public at large.

Kootenay Plains

This site would be representative of the Montane zone of the Rocky Mountain Natural Region. It contains landscapes representative of the northern montane as well as special features. Dr. Martha Kostuch of ALERT presented a slide-tape presentation on Kootenay Plains which supported the establishment of an ecological reserve. Many questioned the size of the Candidate Ecological Reserve indicating they would like to see the present Natural Area included within the Ecological Reserve. Some questioned whether the suggested four (4) square miles Candidate Ecological Reserve was the most suitable. Overall support for the establishment of an Ecological Reserve was received.

Marshybank

This site would be representative of the Main Foothills in the Foothills Natural Region. Industry representatives attended the meeting to discuss the possible effects an ecological reserve may have on various industrial activities within the area.

Concerns over the proposed size and restrictions which would be placed on off highway vehicle use were also raised by a number of those in attendance. Other than the two concerns noted the majority of those attending supported the establishment of the ecological reserve.

October 24, 1985 - Edmonton

The Committee met to discuss and develop recommendations for Athabasca Dunes, Whitemud Falls, Crow Lake, Marshybank and Kootenay Plains Candidate Ecological Reserves. The recommendations made are as follows:

Athabasca Dunes:

As illustrated on Map 5, the Advisory Committee recommends an area of approximately 14 square miles encompassing the entire dune area be established as an Ecological Reserve. Should it be necessary to reduce the size of the area, the Committee recommends that the area illustrated on Map 6 be established as the ecological reserve.

Whitemud Falls:

The Advisory Committee recommends the area illustrated on Map 7 be established as an ecological reserve.

Crow Lake:

The Advisory Committee recommends the area illustrated on Map 8 be established as an ecological reserve.

Marshybank:

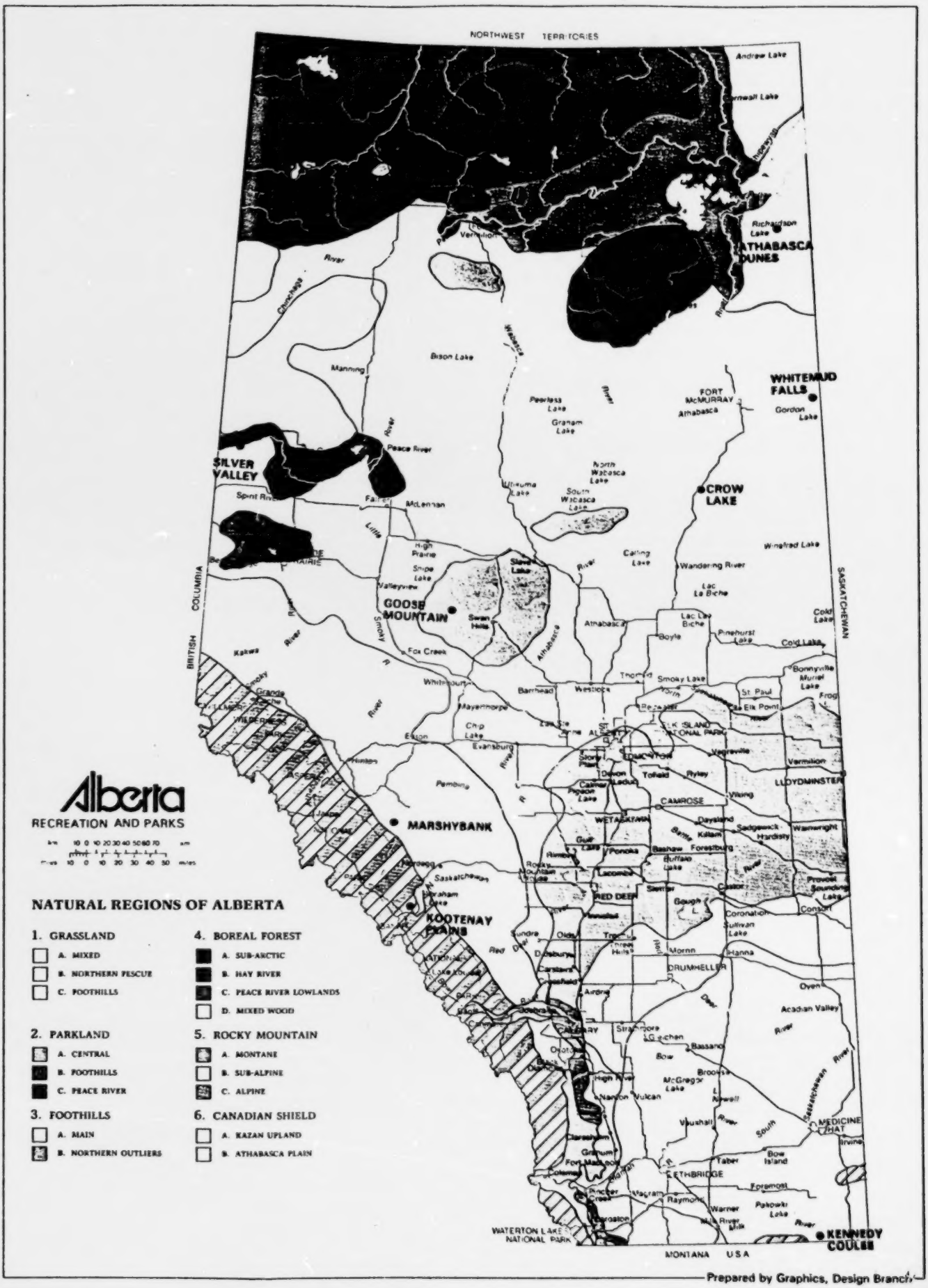
The Advisory Committee recommends the area illustrated on Map 9 be established as an ecological reserve.

Kootenay Plains:

The Advisory Committee recommends that the entire area presently identified as a Natural Area as well as the area under consideration as an Ecological Reserve, less the area of overlap with the Indian Allotment, be established as an Ecological Reserve. Map 10 illustrates the area being recommended. Should it be necessary to reduce the size of the area, it is recommended that the area illustrated on Map 11 be established as the Ecological Reserve. In either option, the ecological reserve would exclude the right-of-way of Highway 11, the channel of the North Saskatchewan River, and the reservoir of Abraham Lake.

The reserve should include the small portion of vacant land adjacent to the Indian Allotment as well as eliminate overlap between the proposed Ecological Reserve and the Indian Allotment.

MAPS OF THE RECOMMENDED BOUNDARIES



Prepared by Graphics, Design Branch

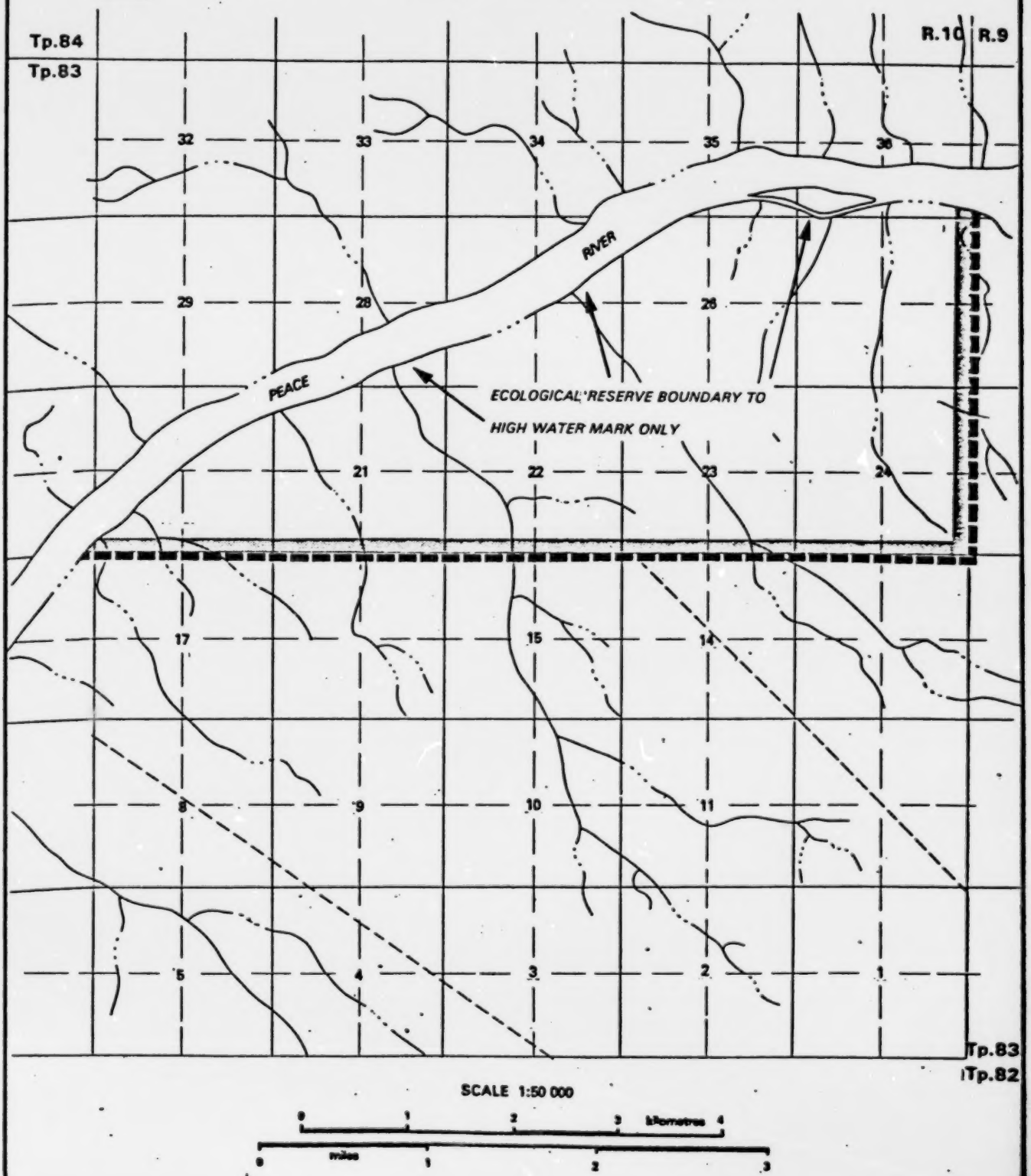
SILVER VALLEY

Tp.83 R.10 W.6th M.

MAP 1

RECOMENDED BOUNDARY

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE - AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION



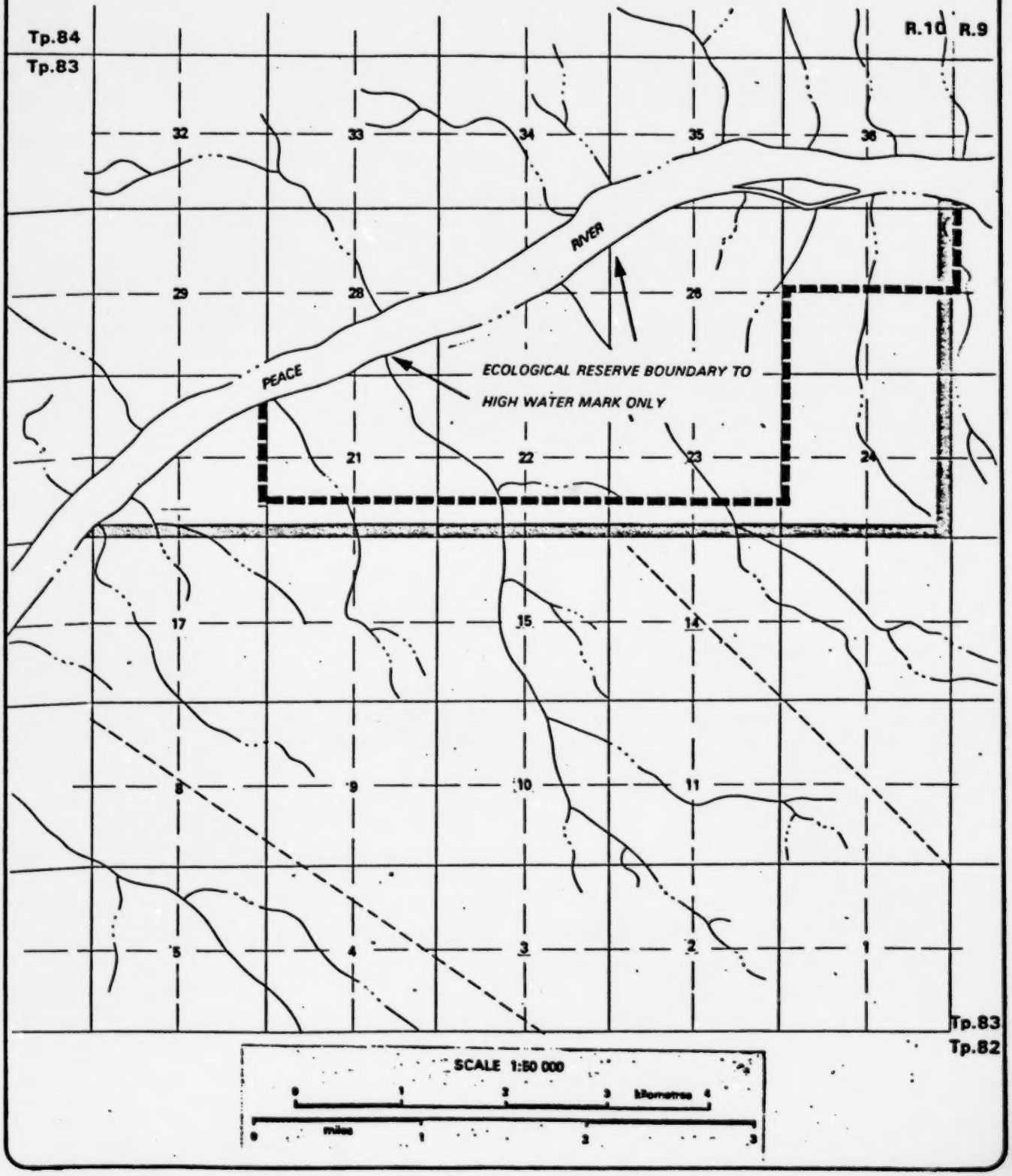
SILVER VALLEY

Tp.83 R.10 W.6th M.

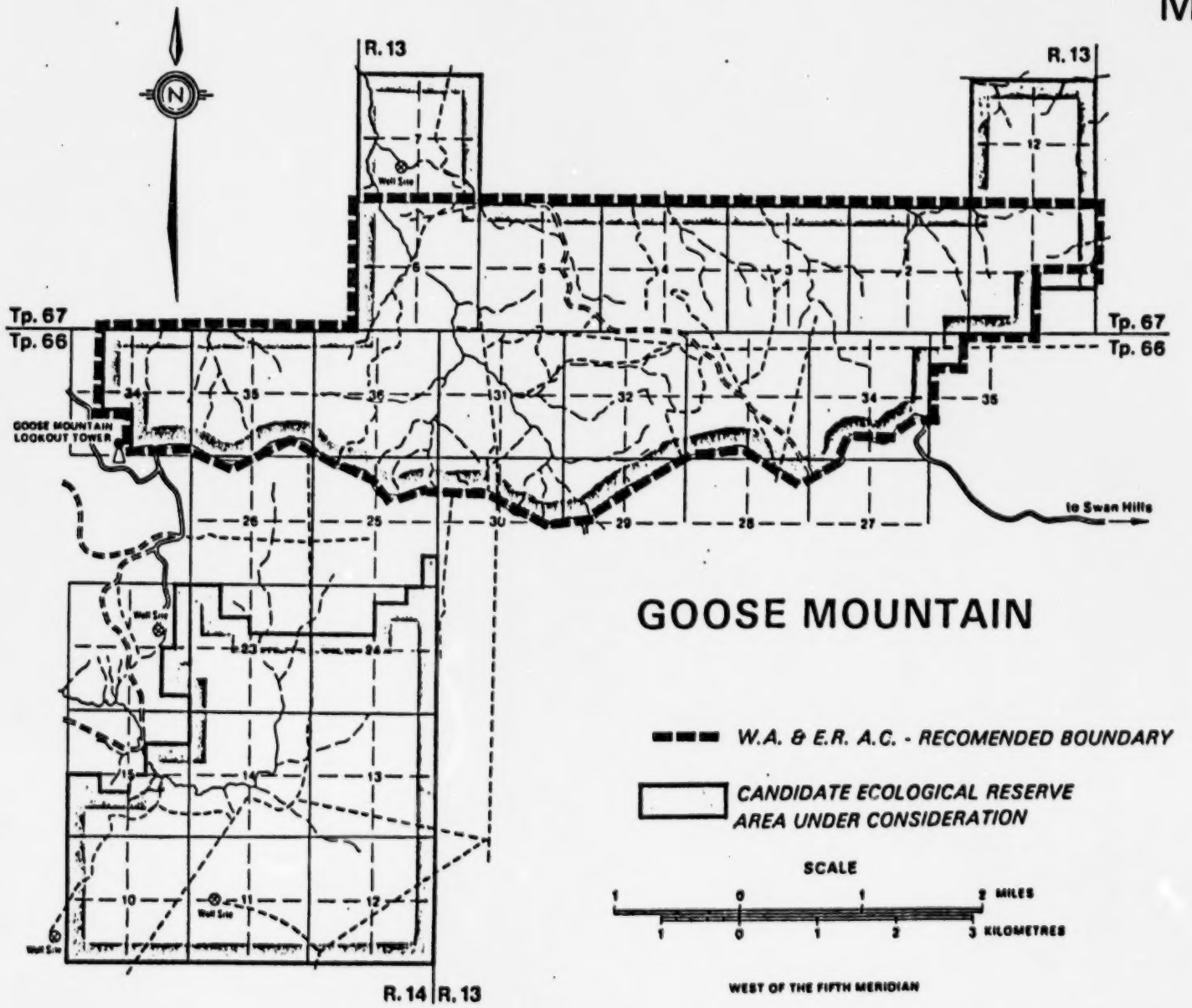
MAP 2

W.A. & E.R. A.C. - ALTERNATE BOUNDARY RECOMENDED

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE - AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION



MAP 3



GOOSE MOUNTAIN

W.A. & E.R. A.C. - RECOMENDED BOUNDARY

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION

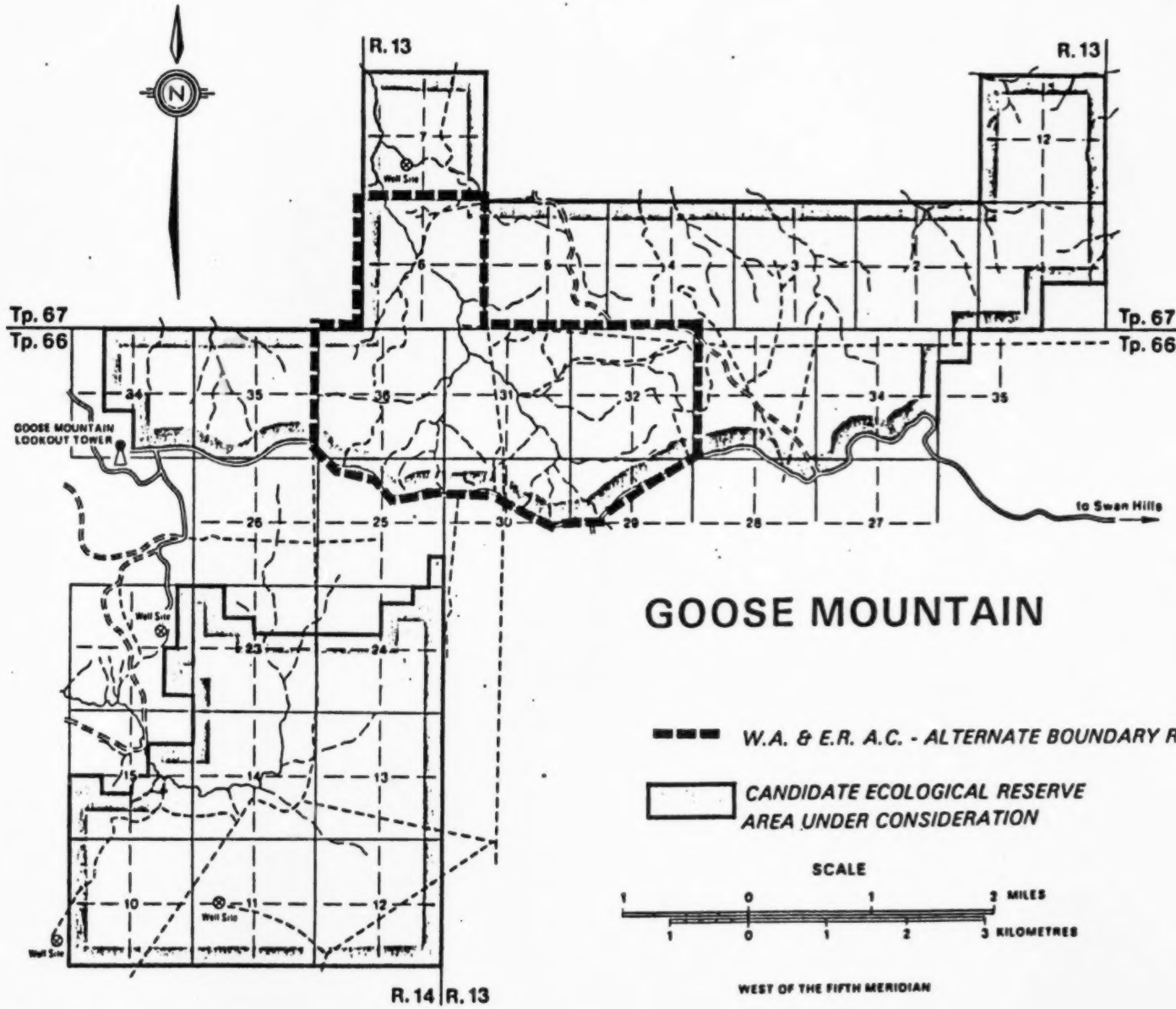
SCALE

1 0 1 2 MILES

1 0 1 2 3 KILOMETRES

WEST OF THE FIFTH MERIDIAN

MAP 4



GOOSE MOUNTAIN

W.A. & E.R. A.C. - ALTERNATE BOUNDARY RECOMENDED

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION

SCALE

1 0 1 2 MILES

1 0 1 2 3 KILOMETRES

WEST OF THE FIFTH MERIDIAN

ATHABASCA DUNES

MAP 5

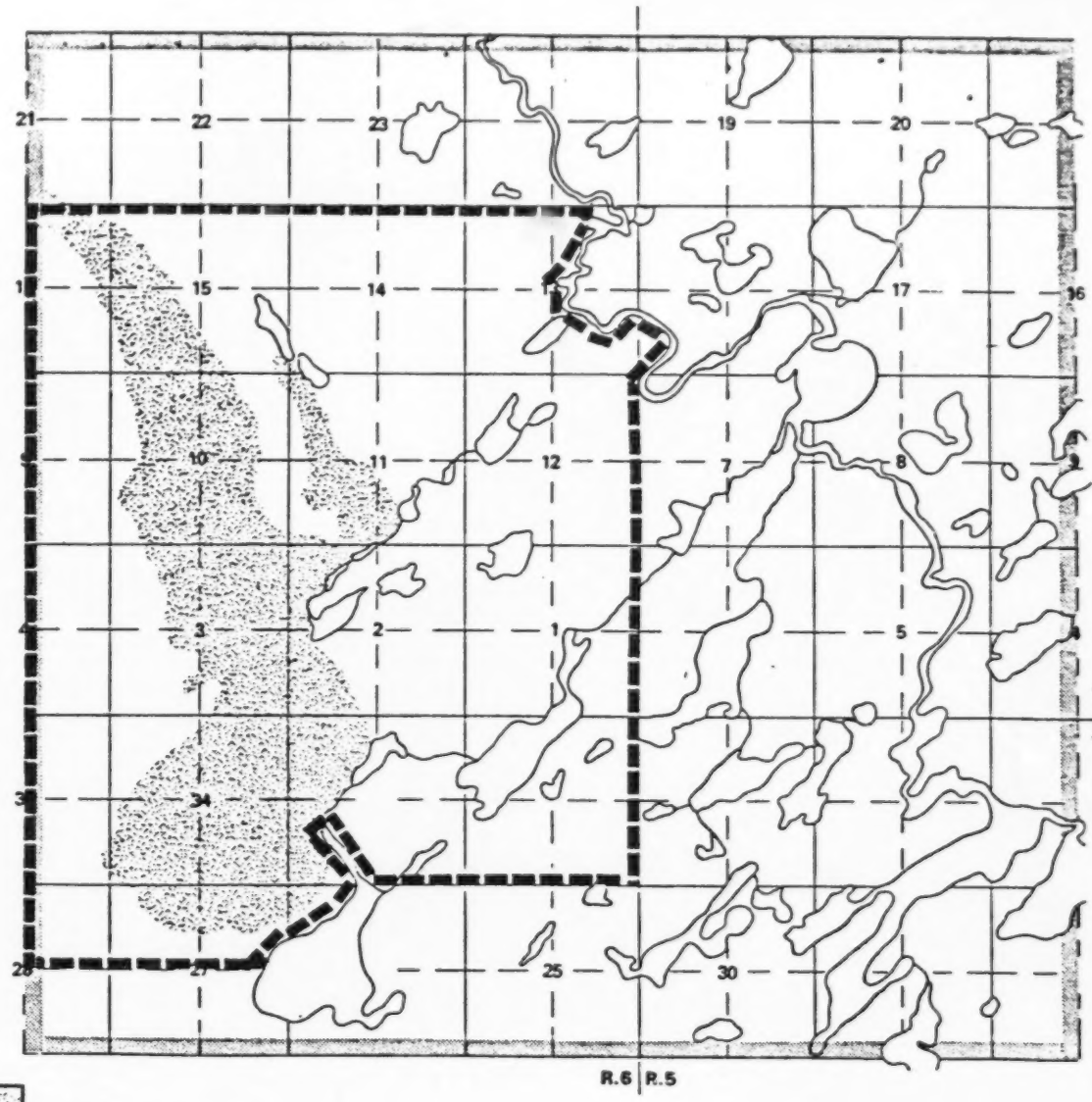
Tp.105, 106 R.5, 6 W.4th M.

W.A. & E.R. A.C. - RECOMENDED BOUNDARY

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE - AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION

1 0 1 miles 2

1 0 1 2 kilometres 3



SAND DUNES

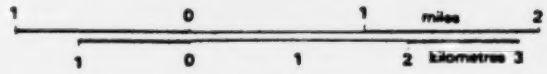
ATHABASCA DUNES

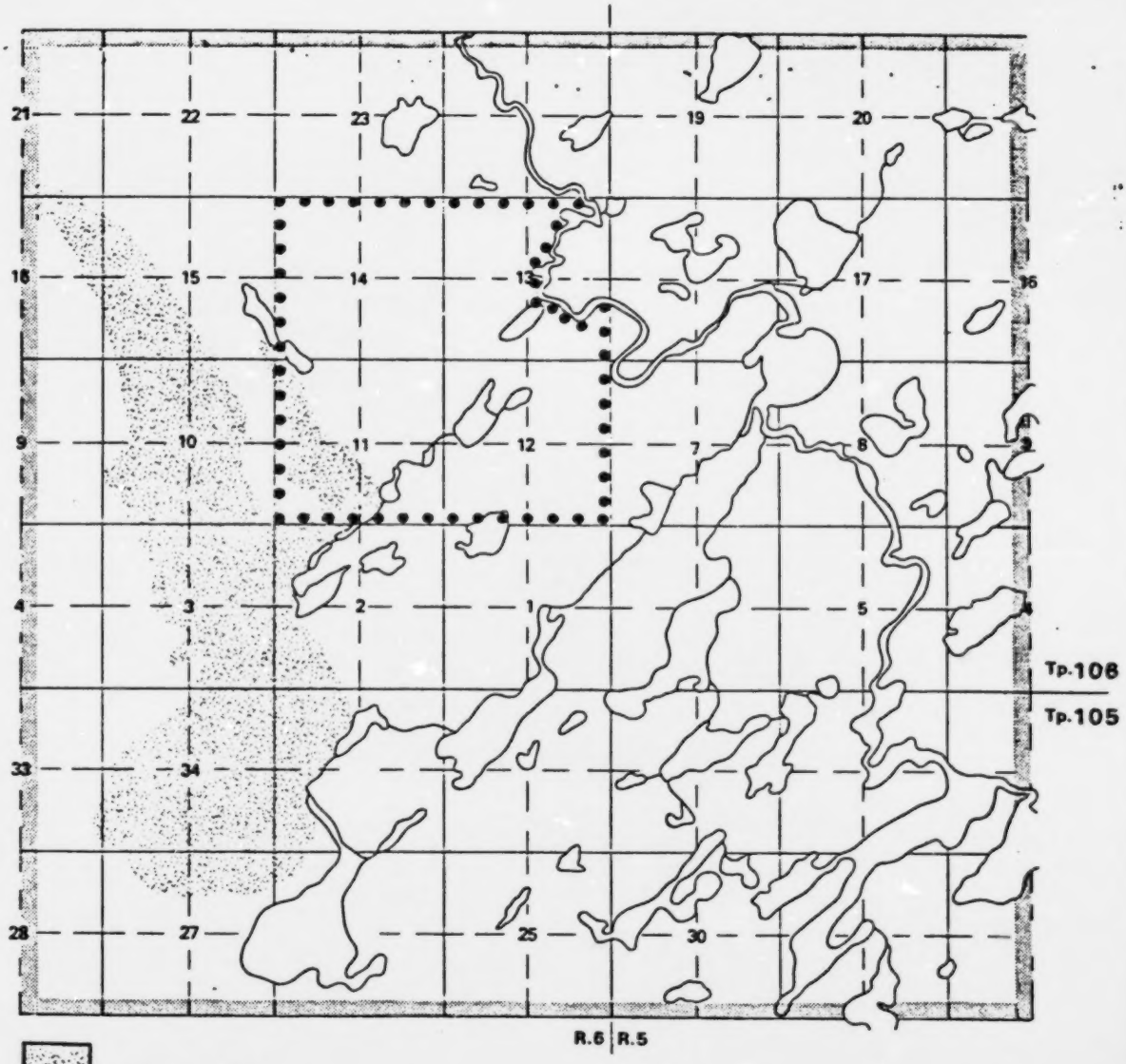
MAP 6

Tp.105, 106 R.5, 6 W.4th M.

• • • • *W.A. & E.R. A.C. - ALTERNATE BOUNDARY RECOMENDED*

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE - AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION





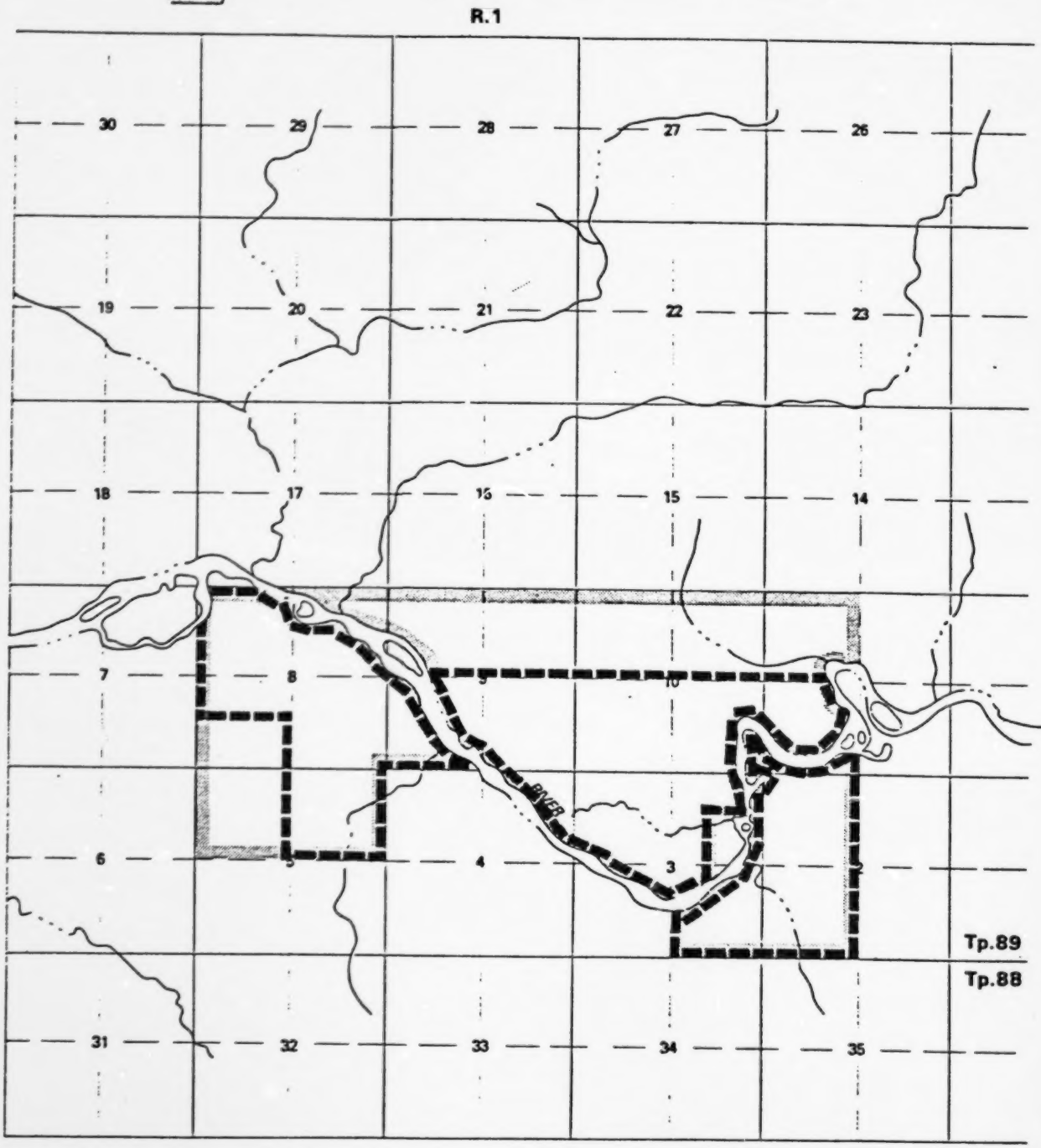
SAND DUNES

WHITEMUD FALLS

MAP 7

Tp.88, 89 R.1 W.4th M.

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE - AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION



SCALE 1:50 000

kilometres 0 1 2 3 4

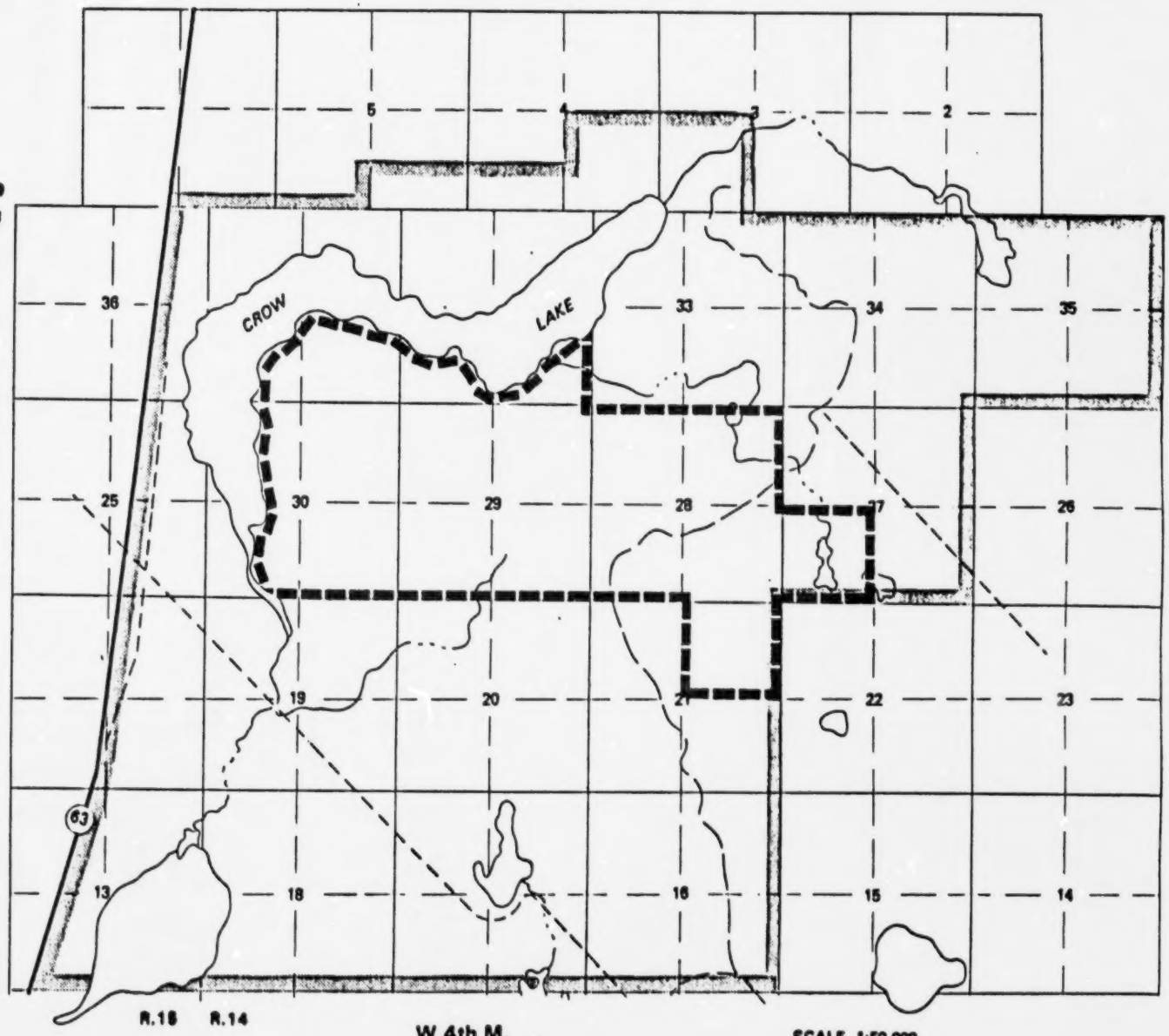
miles 0 1 2 3

W.A. & E.R. A.C. - RECOMENDED BOUNDARY

MAP 8

CROW LAKE

Tp.78, 79 R.14, 15 W.4th M.



SCALE 1:50 000

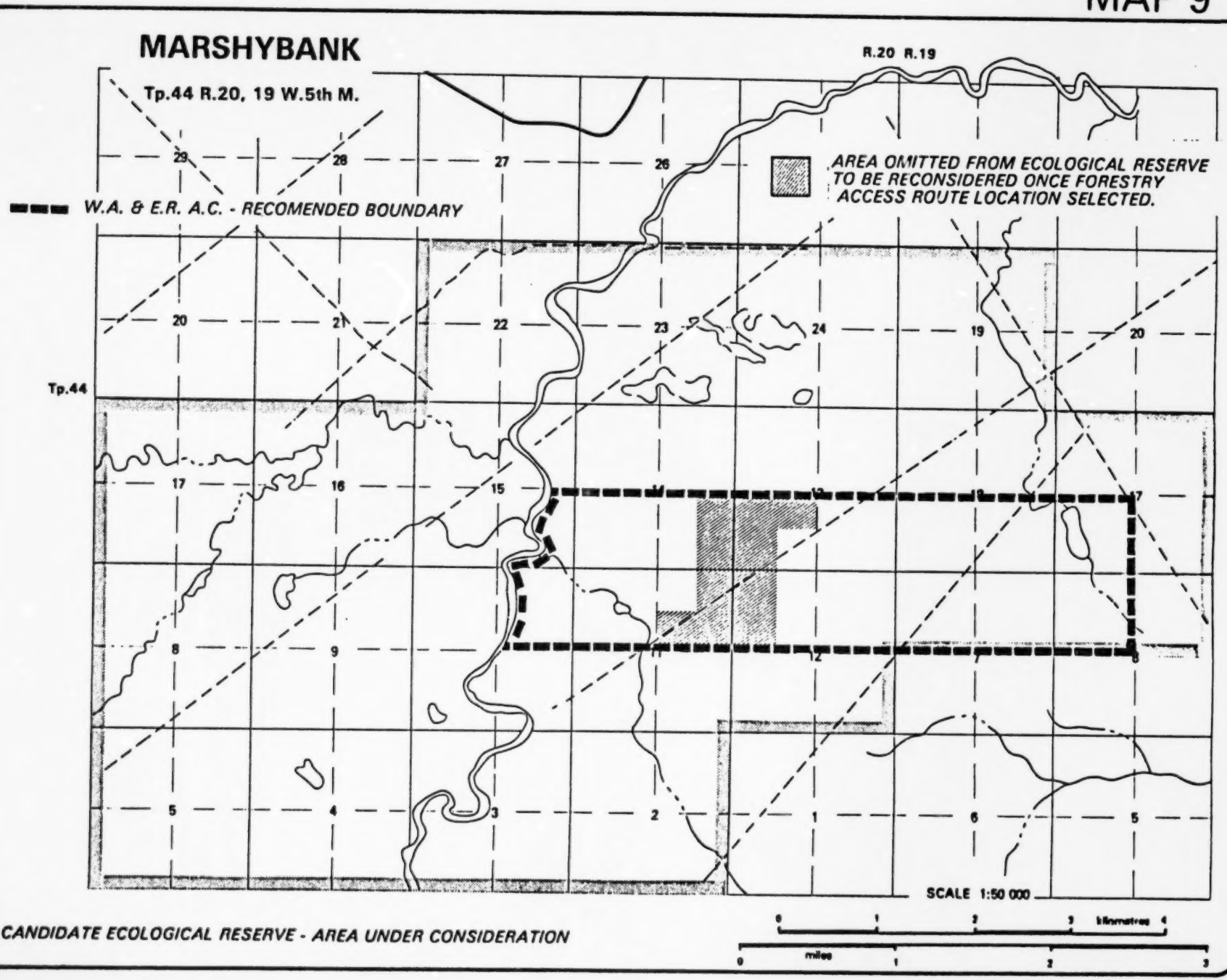
0 1 2 3 kilometres 4

0 miles 1 2 3

RECOMENDED BOUNDARY

CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE - AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION

MAP 9


MARSHYBANK
Tp.44 R.20, 19 W.5th M.
R.20 R.19
AREA OMITTED FROM ECOLOGICAL RESERVE TO BE RECONSIDERED ONCE FORESTRY ACCESS ROUTE LOCATION SELECTED.
W.A. & E.R. A.C. - RECOMENDED BOUNDARY
Tp.44
29
28
27
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3
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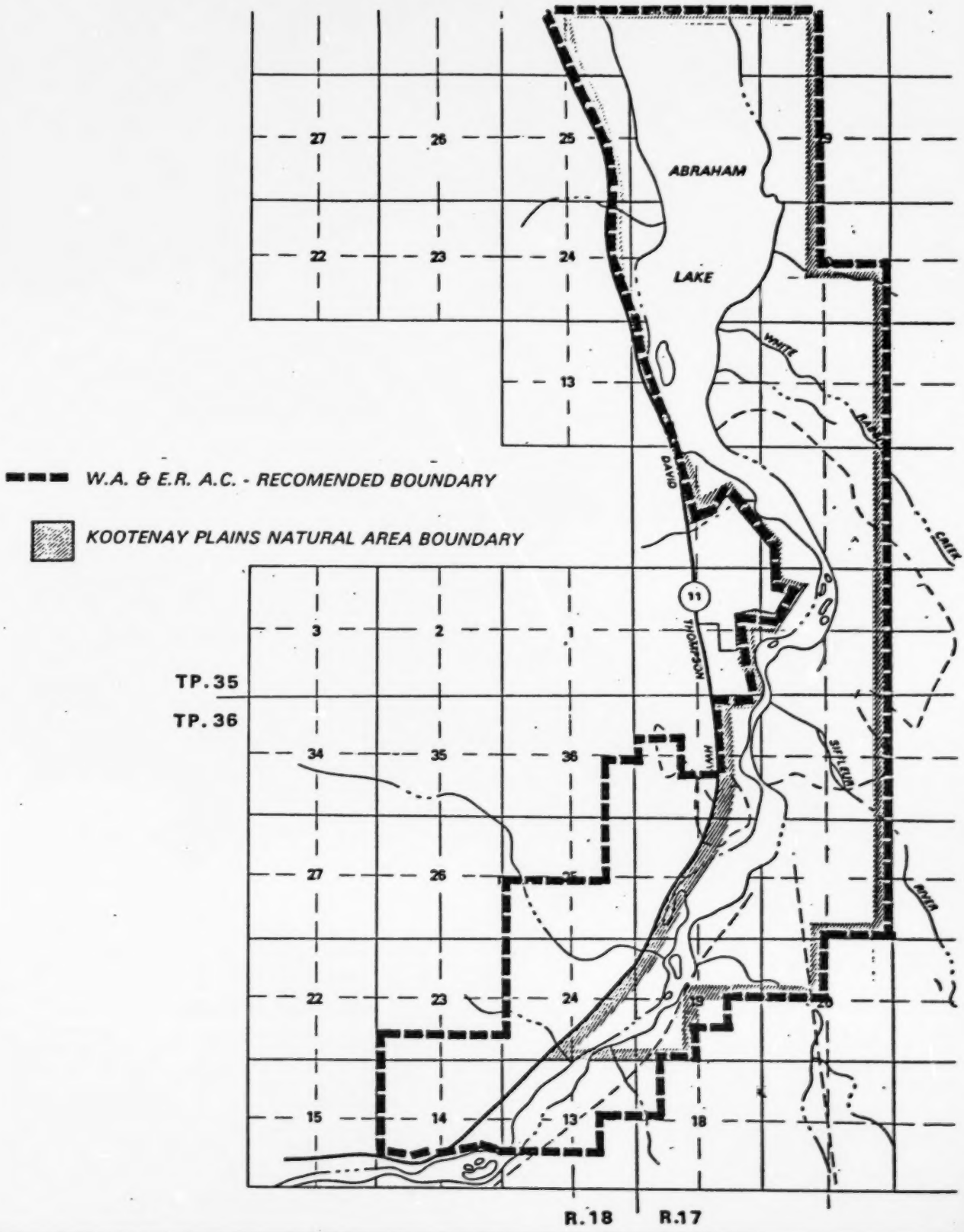
1
6
5
SCALE 1:50 000
CANDIDATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE - AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION
kilometres
miles

KOOTENAY PLAINS

MAP 10

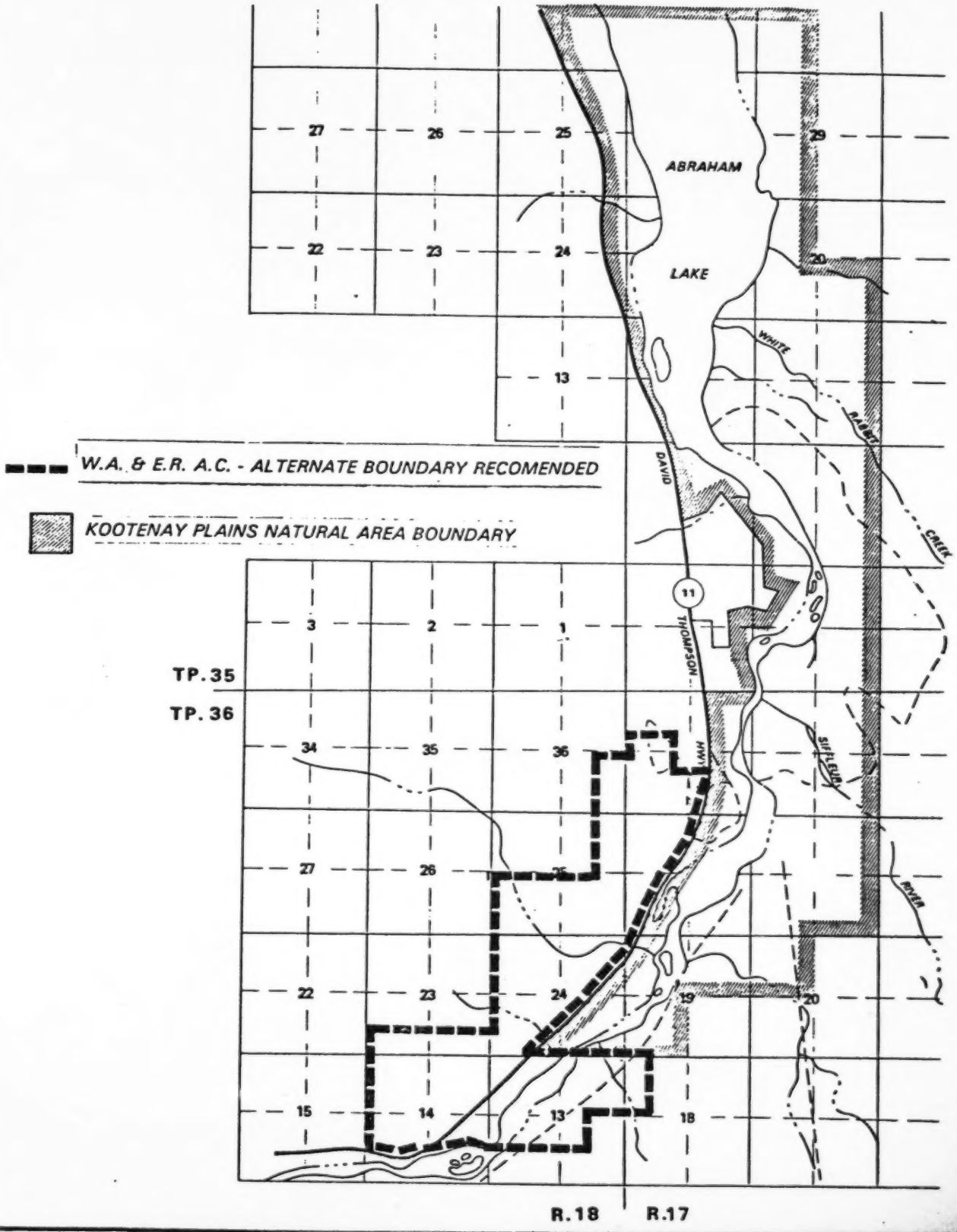
Tp.35, 36 R.17, 18 W.5th M.



KOOTENAY PLAINS

MAP 11

Tp.35, 36 R.17, 18 W.5th M.



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